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Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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R 191119Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8391
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION NATO

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 BONN 08615

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, WB, GE, US, UK, FR, GW, UR
SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH SOVIET AMBASSADOR FALIN:
ALLIED PATROLS IN EAST BERLIN; FRG/SOVIET
RELATIONS; NEW GOVERNMENT IN WEST BERLIN

SUMMARY. FALIN STATED U.S. HAD MISUNDERSTOOD SOVIET POSITION ON ALLIED PATROLS IN EAST BERLIN; SOVIETS WERE NOT ATTEMPTING TO AFFECT ALLIED RIGHTS IN ANY WAY BUT SIMPLY THOUGHT THAT IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE IF PATROLS, WHICH FREQUENTLY WERE CARRIED OUT IN OBJECTIONABLE MANNER, COULD BE QUIETLY PHASED OUT. IF THIS WERE NOT DONE, SOVIETS WOULD HAVE TO FIND OTHER WAYS TO APPROACH MATTER. FALIN HINTED THAT SOVIETS MIGHT STEP UP SOVIET PATROLS IN WESTERN SECTORS AS FIRST STEP; THEREAFTER, THEY MIGHT BEGIN TO MAKE GREATER USE OF AIR CORRIDORS FOR SOVIET FLIGHTS TO WEST. ON FRG-SOVIET RELATIONS, FALIN SAW NO CHANCE OF RESOLVING OUTSTANDING
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PROBLEMS HOLDING UP FRG/SOVIET AGREEMENTS IN CULTURAL, SCIENTIFIC AND LEGAL FIELDS. AT SAME TIME, HE DID NOT THINK THIS WOULD BE OBSTACLE TO BREZHNEV VISIT TO FRG. FALIN ANTICIPATED NO CONCRETE RESULTS FROM GENSCHER'S VISIT TO MOSCOW IN JUNE BUT THOUGHT IT WOULD PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY FOR FRANK EXPOSITION OF RESPECTIVE POSITIONS. ON NEW BERLIN GOVERNMENT, FALIN DID NOT EXCLUDE

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THAT STOBBE WOULD BE IMPROVEMENT OVER PREDECES-
SOR, BUT HE REGRETTED STOBBE'S REMARKS IN RECENT TV
INTERVIEW WHICH SEEMED TO REFLECT UNNECESSARILY TOUGH
ATTITUDE TOWARD GDR. END SUMMARY.

1. SOVIET AMBASSADOR FALIN CALLED ON ME MAY 18 AT HIS
REQUEST TO REPAY MY INITIAL CALL ON HIM LAST FALL.
IN WIDE-RANGING, ONE AND ONE-HALF HOUR TALK, PRIMARY
SUBJECT OF INTEREST CONCERNED SOVIET DEMARCHES
REGARDING ALLIED PATROLS IN EAST BERLIN. FALIN SAID
WESTERN POWERS APPARENTLY HAD MISUNDERSTOOD SOVIET
MOTIVATIONS IN MAKING THESE APPROACHES. HE ASSURED ME
THAT USSR HAD NO INTENTION OF UNDERMINING ALLIED RIGHTS
IN EAST BERLIN, THE EXISTENCE OF WHICH HE ACKNOWLEDGED
AS COUNTERPART OF SOVIET RIGHTS IN WESTERN SECTORS.
HE NOTED THAT EXISTENCE OF PATROLS AS DEMON-
STRATION OF THESE RIGHTS WAS NOWHERE SPECIFIED IN ANY
POST-WAR AGREEMENT BUT WAS SOMETHING WHICH HAD SIMPLY
GROWN UP. IN SOME RESPECTS, MANNER IN WHICH PATROLS
WERE CARRIED OUT COULD BE CONSIDERED PROVOCATIVE AND
OBJECTIONABLE. FOR EXAMPLE, ALLIED PATROLS, PARTICU-
LARLY THOSE CONDUCTED BY UK, ENGAGED IN QUITE OPEN
PHOTOGRAPHY OF GDR MINISTRIES AND INDIVIDUALS ENTERING
AND LEAVING THESE BUILDINGS (ESPECIALLY DEFENSE
MINISTRY). HE SAID THAT SOVIETS BY NO MEANS WISHED TO
CREATE PROBLEMS WITH ALLIES OVER THE QUESTION OF
PATROLS BUT BELIEVED THAT IN INTERESTS OF STABILITY
AND GOOD RELATIONS IN BERLIN THAT IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE
IF PATROLS COULD BE PHASED OUT GRADUALLY OVER PERIOD
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OF MONTHS.

2. IN RESPONSE, I UNDERLINED IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO
RETAINING AND DEMONSTRATING ALLIED RIGHTS IN EAST
BERLIN AND SAID WE REGARDED FLAG PATROLS AS EVIDENCE
OF THESE RIGHTS. FACT THAT SOVIETS HAD RAISED QUES-
TIONS ABOUT THE PATROLS WAS REGARDED AS A VERY SERIOUS
MATTER SINCE IT COULD BE INTERPRETED AS PUTTING INTO
DOUBT OUR RIGHT TO ACCESS TO EAST BERLIN. I SAID THAT
ON OUR PART WE HAD NO INTENTION OF PROVOKING A CRISIS
OVER BERLIN BUT THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT SOVIETS
UNDERSTAND THAT ACTION TO IMPEDE THE FLAG TOURS COULD
HAVE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES. I ADDED THAT ANY SOVIET
INTENTION OF CHANGING THE PRACTICES CONCERNING THE FLAG
TOURS WOULD SEEM TO BE IN CONTRAVENTION OF THE
QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT WHICH HAD BEEN BASED UPON
RECOGNITION OF THE EXISTING SITUATION IN BERLIN, OF
WHICH THE FLAG TOURS WERE A PART.

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AMEMBASSY PARIS
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3. FALIN RESPONDED THAT IF THE ALLIES COULD NOT ACCEPT THE SOVIET SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING THE FLAG TOURS THEN CONSIDERATION WOULD HAVE TO BE GIVEN TO OTHER WAYS OF APPROACHING THE PROBLEM. IF WE INSISTED ON THE TOURS AS A DEMONSTRATION OF OUR RIGHTS IN EAST BERLIN, THEN, HE SPECULATED, THE SOVIETS MIGHT DECIDE TO STEP UP THEIR FLAG TOURS IN THE WESTERN SECTORS TO EQUAL THOSE CONDUCTED BY THE WESTERN ALLIES IN EAST BERLIN. SINCE THERE WERE THREE WESTERN SECTORS, IT FOLLOWED THAT THE SOVIET TOURS WOULD BE TRIPLE THE NUMBER OF WESTERN TOURS IN EAST BERLIN. WHILE HE DOUBTED THAT THIS STEP WOULD BE WELCOMED BY THE POPULATION IN WEST BERLIN, IT WAS STILL SOMETHING WHICH COULD BE UNDERTAKEN TO BALANCE THE RIGHTS OF THE TWO SIDES, WHICH HE CONSIDERED ESSENTIAL. A SECOND STEP, HE SAID, MIGHT INVOLVE INCREASED USE OF AIR CORRIDORS FROM BERLIN TO WEST GERMANY BY SOVIET AIRCRAFT.

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4. PICKING UP MY POINT ON THE "EXISTING SITUATION" RELATING TO THE AGREEMENT, FALIN SAID THE SOVIETS FELT STRONGLY THAT THE FRG HAD ENGAGED IN MANY ACTIONS IN WEST BERLIN SINCE COMPLETION OF THE QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT WHICH REPRESENTED SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES IN THE SITUATION WHICH EXISTED IN THE WESTERN SECTORS AT THE TIME OF THE AGREEMENT. HE CLAIMED THAT THIS WAS AT THE HEART OF SOVIET CONCERN ABOUT BERLIN AND THAT ALL STEPS TAKEN BY THE SOVIET UNION WERE DIRECTED NOT AT THE ALLIES AND THEIR RIGHTS BUT WERE AIMED AT RESTRICTING THE ACTIVITIES OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC TO THE LIMITS WHICH THE SOVIETS BELIEVED WERE FIXED IN THE QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT.

5. ON OTHER MATTERS CONCERNING FRG-SOVIET RELATIONS, FALIN WAS GLOOMY ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR RESOLVING THE LONG-STANDING DIFFERENCES OVER THE BERLIN CLAUSE IN THE PENDING AGREEMENTS BEFORE THE FRG AND THE USSR CONCERNING CULTURAL EXCHANGES, SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION AND LEGAL REPRESENTATION. HERE, HE SAID, THE FRG WISHED TO CHANGE THE SOVIET APPROACH TO BERLIN -- WHICH IS ONE OF PRINCIPLE -- AND THIS IS SIMPLY OUT OF THE QUESTION. AT THE SAME TIME, FALIN DID NOT FEEL THAT FAILURE TO RESOLVE DIFFERENCES OVER THESE AGREEMENTS SHOULD NECESSARILY BE AN IMPEDIMENT TO BREZHNEV'S PLANNED VISIT TO THE FRG LATER THIS YEAR. CONTACT BETWEEN LEADERS OF THE TWO COUNTRIES AND DISCUSSION OF BILATERAL AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES WOULD BE USEFUL IN ITSELF AND HE INDICATED THAT HE EXPECTED THE VISIT TO TAKE PLACE. HE WAS NOT SPECIFIC ABOUT DATES, HOWEVER.

6. FALIN BELIEVED THAT FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER'S VISIT TO MOSCOW IN JUNE WAS UNLIKELY TO PRODUCE ANY FORWARD MOVEMENT ON THE DISPUTED AGREEMENTS OR ON OTHER MATTERS. HOWEVER, HE SAID THE SOVIET SIDE

WELCOMED THE PROSPECT OF A FRANK DISCUSSION WITH GENSCHER AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT RESPECTIVE POINTS OF VIEW ON OUTSTANDING ISSUES.

7. WITH REGARD TO THE NEW GOVERNING MAYOR IN WEST BERLIN, STOBBE, FALIN SAID HE HAD HEARD GOOD THINGS ABOUT HIM AND HOPED THAT HE WOULD BE AN IMPROVEMENT OVER HIS PREDECESSOR. HOWEVER, HE REMARKED THAT

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STOBBE SEEMED TO HAVE TAKEN AN UNNECESSARILY HARSH ATTITUDE TOWARD THE GDR IN A RECENT TV INTERVIEW WHICH DID NOT BODE WELL FOR THE FUTURE. WHILE HE COULD UNDERSTAND THAT STOBBE HAD TO TAKE CERTAIN ATTITUDES IN VIEW OF THE POLITICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL SITUATION OF WEST BERLIN, FALIN THOUGHT STOBBE HAD GONE TOO FAR AND WAS CREATING OBSTACLES WHICH COULD HINDER PROSPECTS FOR BETTER RELATIONS WITH THE EAST IN THE FUTURE.

8. COMMENT. FALIN'S REMARKS CONCERNING ALLIED PATROLS IN EAST BERLIN AND ACTIONS THE SOVIETS MIGHT TAKE IF PATROLS ARE NOT PHASED OUT ARE OF INTEREST, ALTHOUGH WE CANNOT BE CERTAIN THAT THEY REFLECT CONSIDERED, OFFICIAL SOVIET PLANS REGARDING THEIR OWN ACTIONS OR WHETHER THEY ARE INTENDED ONLY TO INCREASE THE PRESSURE AGAINST OUR PATROLS. HIS HINTS ABOUT STEPPING UP SOVIET PATROL ACTIVITIES IN WEST BERLIN ARE REMINISCENT OF SIMILAR REMARKS WHICH WE HAVE SEEN
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REPORTED RECENTLY FROM VARIOUS SOVIET SOURCES; HIS
COMMENT ABOUT INCREASED SOVIET USE OF THE AIR CORRIDORS

SOUNDS PUZZLING, TO SAY THE LEAST, SINCE IT IS
DIFFICULT TO SEE WHAT THE SOVIETS WOULD DERIVE FROM
INCREASED USE OF THE CORRIDORS, PARTICULARLY VIS-A-VIS
THE GDR.
STOESSEL

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